

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 41

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment  
of a National Office for Social Work Research.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 25 (legislative day, JANUARY 5), 2011

Mr. INOUE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred  
to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for  
the establishment of a National Office for Social Work  
Research.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “National Office for  
5       Social Work Research Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       Congress makes the following findings:

8               (1) Social workers help people overcome some  
9       of life’s most difficult challenges: poverty, discrimi-  
10      nation, abuse, addiction, physical illness, divorce,

1 loss, unemployment, educational problems, disability,  
2 and mental illness. They help prevent crises and  
3 counsel individuals, families, and communities to  
4 cope more effectively with the stresses of everyday  
5 life. Professional social workers are found in every  
6 facet of community life—in schools, hospitals, men-  
7 tal health clinics, senior centers, elected office, pri-  
8 vate practices, prisons, the military, corporations,  
9 and in numerous public and private agencies that  
10 serve individuals and families in need.

11 (2) Social workers focus on the improvement of  
12 individual and family functioning and the creation of  
13 effective health and mental health prevention and  
14 treatment interventions in order for individuals to  
15 become more productive members of society.

16 (3) Social workers provide front line prevention  
17 and treatment services in the areas of school vio-  
18 lence, aging, teen pregnancy, child abuse, domestic  
19 violence, juvenile crime, and substance abuse, par-  
20 ticularly in rural and underserved communities.

21 (4) Social workers are in a unique position to  
22 provide valuable research information on these com-  
23 plex social concerns, taking into account a wide  
24 range of social, medical, economic, and community

1 influences from an interdisciplinary, family-centered  
 2 and community-based approach.

3 (5) Social work research as it relates to the  
 4 health of individuals sheds light on the behavioral  
 5 and social determinants of wellness and disease and  
 6 helps to develop effective interventions for improving  
 7 health outcomes.

8 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL OFFICE OF SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH.**

9 Part A of title IV of the Public Health Service Act  
 10 (42 U.S.C. 281 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end  
 11 the following:

12 **“SEC. 404I. NATIONAL OFFICE OF SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH.**

13 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within  
 14 the Office of the Director of NIH an office to be known  
 15 as the Office of Social Work Research (in this section re-  
 16 ferred to as the ‘Office’), which shall be headed by a Direc-  
 17 tor (in this section referred to as the ‘Director’) to be ap-  
 18 pointed by the Director of NIH.

19 “(b) PURPOSE OF OFFICE.—The general purpose of  
 20 the Office is the conduct and support of, and dissemina-  
 21 tion of, targeted research concerning social work methods  
 22 and outcomes related to problems of significant social con-  
 23 cern. The Office shall—

24 “(1) promote research and training that is de-  
 25 signed to inform social work practices, and otherwise

1       increase the knowledge base which promotes a  
2       healthier America; and

3               “(2) provide policymakers with empirically  
4       based research information to enable such policy-  
5       makers to better understand complex social issues  
6       and make informed funding decisions about service  
7       effectiveness and cost efficiency.

8       “(c) DUTIES.—

9               “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office  
10      shall carry out the following:

11              “(A) Recommend an agenda for con-  
12      ducting and supporting social work research  
13      through the national research institutes and  
14      centers. The agenda shall provide for a broad  
15      range of research, training and education activi-  
16      ties, including scientific workshops and  
17      symposia to identify social work research oppor-  
18      tunities.

19              “(B) With respect to social work, promote  
20      coordination and cooperation among the na-  
21      tional research institutes and centers and enti-  
22      ties whose research is supported by such insti-  
23      tutes.

24              “(C) If determined appropriate, and in col-  
25      laboration with the directors of the other rel-

1           evant institutes and centers of the National In-  
2           stitutes of Health, enter into cooperative agree-  
3           ments with and make grants for centers of ex-  
4           cellence on social work in accordance with sec-  
5           tion 404G.

6           “(D) Promote the sufficient allocation of  
7           the resources of the National Institutes of  
8           Health for conducting and supporting social  
9           work research.

10          “(E) Promote and encourage the establish-  
11          ment of a centralized clearinghouse for social  
12          work research that will provide understandable  
13          information about this research to the public,  
14          social service professionals, medical profes-  
15          sionals, patients and families.

16          “(F) Biennially prepare a report that de-  
17          scribes the social work research and education  
18          activities being conducted or supported through  
19          the national research institutes and centers,  
20          and that identifies particular projects or types  
21          of projects that should in the future be con-  
22          ducted or supported by the national research in-  
23          stitutes and centers or other entities in the field  
24          of social work research.

1                   “(G) Prepare the annual report of the Di-  
 2                   rector of NIH to Congress concerning social  
 3                   work research conducted by or supported  
 4                   through the national research institutes and  
 5                   centers.

6                   “(2) PRINCIPAL ADVISOR REGARDING SOCIAL  
 7                   WORK RESEARCH.—With respect to social work re-  
 8                   search, the Director shall serve as the principal advi-  
 9                   sor to the Director of NIH and shall provide advice  
 10                  to other relevant agencies. The Director shall pro-  
 11                  vide liaison with national and international patient,  
 12                  health and behavioral health and social service orga-  
 13                  nizations concerned with social work research.

14                  “(d) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the  
 15                  term ‘social work research’ means the study of preventive  
 16                  interventions, treatment of acute psychosocial problems,  
 17                  care and rehabilitation of individuals with severe, chronic  
 18                  difficulties, community development interventions, organi-  
 19                  zational administration, and the effects of social policy ac-  
 20                  tions on the practice of social work (TFSWR, 1991, p.1).  
 21                  Social work research may cover the entire lifespan, and  
 22                  may be focused at clinical and services and policy issues,  
 23                  focusing on individual, family, group, community or orga-  
 24                  nizational levels of intervention and analysis.

1       “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the  
 2 purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized  
 3 to be appropriated such sums as may have been appro-  
 4 priated for fiscal year 2011 for such purpose, and  
 5 \$4,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015.”.

6 **SEC. 4. SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH CENTERS OF EXCEL-**  
 7 **LENCE.**

8       Title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C.  
 9 281 et seq.), as amended by section 3, is further amended  
 10 by inserting after section 404I the following:

11 **“SEC. 404J. SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH CENTERS OF EXCEL-**  
 12 **LENCE.**

13       “(a) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND GRANTS.—

14       “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office  
 15 of Social Work Research (in this section referred to  
 16 as the ‘Director’), in collaboration with the directors  
 17 of the other relevant institutes and centers of the  
 18 National Institutes of Health, may enter into coop-  
 19 erative agreements with, and make grants to, public  
 20 or private nonprofit entities to pay all or part of the  
 21 cost of planning, establishing, or strengthening, and  
 22 providing basic operating support for, centers of ex-  
 23 cellence for clinical and psychosocial research, train-  
 24 ing in, and demonstration of social work research.

1           “(2) POLICIES.—A cooperative agreement or  
2           grant under paragraph (1) shall be entered into in  
3           accordance with policies established by the Director  
4           of NIH.

5           “(b) COORDINATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTES.—  
6           The Director shall coordinate the activities under this sec-  
7           tion with similar activities conducted by other national re-  
8           search institutes, centers and agencies of the National In-  
9           stitutes of Health, and the Department of Veterans Af-  
10          fairs, the Department of Defense, the Administration for  
11          Children and Families, the Department of Justice, the De-  
12          partment of Education, the Department of Housing and  
13          Urban Development, to the extent that such institutes,  
14          centers and agencies have responsibilities that are related  
15          to social work research.

16          “(c) USES FOR FEDERAL PAYMENTS UNDER COOP-  
17          ERATIVE AGREEMENTS OR GRANTS.—Federal payments  
18          made under a cooperative agreement or grant under sub-  
19          section (a) may be used for—

20               “(1) staffing, administrative, and other basic  
21               operating costs, including such patient care costs as  
22               are required for research;

23               “(2) interdisciplinary training for health and  
24               social service professionals on research and the use  
25               of evidence, with respect to social work research; and



1           “(3) social work research and demonstration  
2       programs.

3       “(d) PERIOD OF SUPPORT; ADDITIONAL PERIODS.—  
4       Support of a center under subsection (a) may be for a  
5       period of not to exceed 5 years. Such period may be ex-  
6       tended by the Director for additional periods of not to ex-  
7       ceed 5 years if the operations of such center have been  
8       reviewed by an appropriate technical and scientific peer  
9       review group established by the Director and if such group  
10      has recommended to the Director that such period should  
11      be extended.

12      “(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For the  
13      purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized  
14      to be appropriated such sums as may have been appro-  
15      priated for fiscal year 2011 for such purpose, and  
16      \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2012 through 2015.”.

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